

people are for it in particular. It's easy to give a talk, and harder to foot the bill. And I think it is very important that we not only remain committed to substantive reforms—you know, I believe that every school district should have a "no social promotion" policy, but I don't think the kids should be branded failures. I think if they're not making it, then they should get the extra help they need. And that's why we have moved on from \$1 million, and \$20 million, to \$200 million, to \$600 million this year in Federal support for after-school programs and summer school programs. We're working at this. But America needs to focus on this.

We're going to honor Andy. I'm going to bring him up here to give him his award, and he's going to give a speech, and we're all going to practically laugh or cry. And it will be a wonderful thing. But I want America to hear this when they see you tonight on television. We have 2 million teachers to hire in the next few years. And in the best of all worlds, they would, every one of them, be just as committed and just as knowledgeable and just as effective as you are. And it isn't going to happen unless we make the necessary decisions and put the necessary priorities in place, not only in Washington but in every State capital and every local school district in the country.

So I say today, the best way we can honor America's teachers is for the rest of us to give them the tools to succeed with our children in the 21st century. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, the 1999 Teacher of the Year, Mr. Andy Baumgartner.

*[At this point, the President presented the award to Mr. Baumgartner, who then made brief remarks.]*

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:10 a.m. in Presidential Hall (formerly Room 450) in the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Therese Knecht Dozier, Special Adviser on Teaching to the Secretary of Education; Gordon M. Ambach, executive director, Council of Chief State School Officers; and Ernest Fleishman, senior vice president, Scholastic, Inc. Mr. Baumgartner teaches kindergarten at A. Brian Merry Elementary School in Augusta, GA. The transcript made available by the Office of the

Press Secretary also included the remarks of Mr. Baumgartner.

### **Statement Commemorating the Deportation and Massacre of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire**

*April 19, 1999*

This week marks the commemoration of one of the saddest chapters of this century: the deportations and massacres of one and a half million Armenians in the closing years of the Ottoman Empire.

We join with Armenian-Americans across the Nation and with the Armenian community abroad to mourn the loss of so many innocent lives. Today, against the background of events in Kosovo, all Americans should recommit themselves to building a world where such events never occur again.

As we learn from the past, we also build for the future. In this country, Armenian-Americans have made great contributions to every field, from science to commerce to culture. Meanwhile, the people of Armenia, who suffered not only from the massacres but the ravages of two World Wars and the pain of 70 years of Soviet rule, at last have obtained their independence and their freedom. Armenia is pursuing democratic and market reforms, assuming its rightful place among the members of the Euro-Atlantic community of nations. We wish the people of Armenia—and all of their neighbors in the Caucasus region—success in their efforts to bring about the lasting peace and prosperity that they deserve. America will continue to support these efforts.

On behalf of the American people, I extend my best wishes to all Armenians at this time of remembrance.

### **Statement on the Deaths of David and Penny McCall**

*April 19, 1999*

Hillary and I are saddened to learn of the deaths of David and Penny McCall, two Americans who dedicated their lives to helping people in need around the world. They were killed in an auto accident, along with a French colleague, Yvette Pierpaoli, and

their Albanian driver, while engaged in their life's work.

They were in Albania on a mission for Refugees International to explore the possibilities of setting up a region-wide radio network to help Kosovar-Albanian refugees locate lost family members.

By reaching out to help the Kosovar refugees and war-affected people throughout the world, they stood for the best of the American spirit. Our thoughts and prayers are with their loved ones.

**Remarks on Presenting the  
Presidential Medal of Freedom to  
Former Chancellor Helmut Kohl  
of Germany**

*April 20, 1999*

**The President.** Secretary Cohen, Mr. Berger, distinguished Ambassadors, Senator Roth, Congressman Pickett, other Members of the Congress, retired Members of Congress, present and former members of the diplomatic corps, and to our German and American exchange students who are here: Welcome to the White House.

Today it is my privilege to confer America's highest civilian honor on a great statesman of the 20th century, the Federal Republic of Germany's longest serving Chancellor, Helmut Kohl.

President Kennedy first saw the design for the Medal of Freedom on July 3, 1963, just a week after he had gone to Berlin and challenged a new generation of Germans to forge a future of freedom and unity, of European integration and American partnership. No one did more to fulfill the hopes that President Kennedy expressed on that trip than Helmut Kohl.

Very few non-Americans have received the Medal of Freedom. The last year a foreign leader was honored was 1991, when President Bush presented the award to Margaret Thatcher. That day we celebrated a partnership among nations and leaders that helped to end the cold war with a victory for freedom.

Today we honor a partnership dedicated to building a 21st century Europe that can preserve the freedom and peace and find

genuine unity for the first time. Today we honor the leader whose values and vision have made that possible.

In 1991 the world was very different. The Berlin Wall had come down, but a profound gulf separated the eastern half of Europe from its more affluent neighbors to the West. Everyone agreed that something had to be done to bring Europe together, but not everyone had a clear idea of what that something should be.

Some people thought NATO should go the way of the Warsaw Pact, and that in its place we had to build something new, untested, unproven, a community that embraced everyone but imposed no true obligations on anyone. Others felt that our challenges in Eastern Germany and Eastern Europe consisted simply of sending assistance and plenty of advice. They were in no hurry to open our institutions to nations and people they thought of as distant and foreign.

But Helmut Kohl understood that we needed a bold vision, backed by a practical blueprint, grounded in the institutions that had served us so well for so long. He said, "We are all called upon to construct a new architecture for the European house, a permanent and just peace order for our continent."

Consider the splendid house that has risen since then. Germany is united. Europe has achieved economic and monetary union. NATO has three new members. The European Union soon will embrace nations from the Baltics to the Balkans. What a remarkable few years it has been.

The story of Helmut Kohl is the story of 20th century Germany. He was born in 1930 in Ludwigshafen, a small city on the Rhine. He saw firsthand the ravages of nazism. His brother, Walter, perished in the war that tore Europe apart. But the young man, then called "*der Lange*," the tall one, was quick to see the possibilities of hope and rebirth in the postwar world.

Through the Marshall plan, he saw firsthand what Europeans and Americans could do together to spread good will and support for democracy among young people.